



## DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

### News Release

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GOVERNOR

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### **DLNR JOINS WITH DEPT. OF EDUCATION TO STOCK WAILUA PUBLIC FISHING AREA**

WAILUA, KAUA'I – A unique partnership between state government, the private sector and the community is providing Kaua'i students with hands-on experience in the practices and principles of natural resource management. It is the first instance in the state where a public educational institution will assist in managing a public fishing area.

Today, students at Kapa'a High School released bluegill sunfish into the Wailua public fishing area, under a partnership between the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and the Department of Education's Workplace Readiness and Career and Technology Education program. The fish were raised by students at Wahiawa Middle School on O'ahu in cooperation with DLNR's Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) and transported by air to Kaua'i for release.

"We are pleased to work with Kapa'a High School in this unique partnership that we hope will inspire the youth and community to actively participate in managing Hawai'i's resources," said Laura H. Thielen, DLNR chairperson.

Wade Ishikawa, DLNR Aquatic Resources education specialist, has worked with DOE Kaua'i District Superintendents Daniel Hamada, and William Arakaki to set up this partnership to involve Kapa'a students.

Support from private foundations Hawai'i Community Foundation, PAHIO Development, Inc. and Kaua'i Economic Development Board has made it possible to establish a freshwater fisheries facility on the Kapa'a High School campus. There, students are able to do research projects in aquaculture, stock enhancement, and find other opportunities for exploring natural science and resource management.

Students of Kapa'a High teacher Brandon Fujita have been going to Wailua Reservoir on a monthly basis to collect data on water conditions and forage fish populations. The students have

developed a website ( <http://www.k12.hi.us/~bfujita>) on their activity from the start of the school year.

Students are working on a video presentation about their activities and what they have learned. They are also preparing a draft technical report to summarize the data collected, and together with DLNR fisheries managers, use this to make management decisions to improve the fish population in Wailua reservoir.

The students will continue to gather information about the reservoir and its surrounding habitat on a yearly basis of the reservoir to better understand resource management from mauka to makai.

Student research includes oral histories from longtime Kaua'i residents Hobie Goodale and Nancy (Sloggett) Goodale who remember when Wailua Reservoir had good fish populations. Children of Wailua would ask Ms. Goodale's father for permission to fish there.

Kapa'a High School principal Gilmore Youn, who also grew up in the area, fondly remembers catching many bluegill and bass in a day, and would like to see their populations restored.

Youn is enthusiastic about this educational partnership because it will allow students from Kapa'a and Wailua school to 'malama' (care for) their own backyard, and encourage them to take active part in understanding, managing and restoring the resources within their own community. He also hopes that their experience will inspire further interest in the environmental sciences.

DLNR's Division of Aquatic Resources operates two Public Fishing Areas on Kaua'i.

The Koke'e Public Fishing Area is situated 10 miles north of the town of Kekaha, and includes approximately 13 miles of fishable streams, two miles of ditches, and a 15 acre reservoir. The fishing area is located about 3,000 feet above sea level near Koke'e State Park and Waimea Canyon. This Public Fishing Area (PFA) is limited by a fishing season, and the only available species is rainbow trout.

The Wailua reservoir is located in Wailua, approximately 4 miles north on Kuamo'o Road.

Wailua Reservoir covers approximately 60 acres. This public fishing area is fishable year round. Anglers can catch: bluegill (bag limit – 2 per person, 7 inches minimum length; smallmouth bass (bag limit - 2 per person, 9 inches minimum size); largemouth bass( bag limit - 2 per person, 9 inches minimum length, and 14 inches maximum length, Tucunare (bag limit – 2 per person, 12 inches minimum length and 15 maximum length ).

A valid Hawai'i Freshwater Fishing License is required at both PFAs. For more information about freshwater fishing license and public fishing areas on Kaua'i call the Division of Aquatic Resources at 274-3344, or go to the DAR website at <http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/dar/index.html>

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